

the back of the head and upper breast were black; the wings were black marked with white; and the tail was black except for an outer strip of white extending to the tip.

In our discussion on the identity of the bird, all black-and-white Australian species were considered but finally rejected. Though the identification of the bird seemed insoluble, I retained the 'identikit' drawing.

About two years later, when consulting Smythies' *Birds of Borneo*, the figure of the White Wagtail on plate XXVIa instantly reminded me of the Woodanilling bird. I compared this figure with my drawing and found the two practically identical. I now have no doubt that the bird seen by Cooke and Gibb belonged to one or another of the east Asian subspecies of *Motacilla alba*. All the latter are migratory, most birds spending the northern winter in northeastern India and southern China, a few individuals extending to the Indo-Chinese countries and the Philippines but seldom further south.

—G. M. STORR, Western Australian Museum, Perth.

Additions to the Kalbarri Bird List.—Following the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union Camp of 1948 at the mouth of the Murchison River, a list of birds known to occur there was published in *Emu*, 48: 212. Further species—Golden Plover, White-headed Stilt, Little Corella and Variegated Wren—were recorded by K. Buller, *W. Aust. Nat.*, 2: 82 and a reference to Budgerygahs appears in *W. Aust. Nat.*, 3:37.

I was at Kalbarri from June 18 to 21, 1974 and noted the following species additional to those listed in the sources mentioned above:

Crested Pigeon, *Ocyphaps lophotes*. A flock of at least three birds was flushed between Murchison House Station and the access road to Kalbarri.

Bustard, *Eupodotis australis*. This was reported to the R.A.O.U. party by residents, but not sighted. I encountered one bird between the gorge at Z Bend and the access road to Kalbarri.

Redthroat, *Pyrholaemus brunneus*. One bird was encountered at The Loop. This was perched on a small tree and was singing vigorously. It permitted a close approach and was viewed through binoculars in a good light. In the same area a Black-eared Cuckoo, *Chrysococcyx osculans* was calling. This species favours the Redthroat as a host.

Little Wood-Swallow, *Artamus minor*. This bird was not seen by the R.A.O.U. party, but is mentioned in *Birds of Western Australia*, Serventy and Whittell, as occurring in the Murchison gorges. We saw several in flight at The Loop and encountered several resting on the road to Hawkhead Lookout. One was slow in taking evasive action and was nearly struck by the windscreen of our vehicle. In the Northern Territory, I found Little Wood-Swallows given to sitting on roads, but had not previously seen this practice in Western Australia.

—ERIC. H. SEDGWICK, Harvey.

Birds and the Total Eclipse—Observations from Albany.—Birds are not numerous on Mt. Clarence at Albany even though most of it is covered with quite thick scrub. Before the eclipse began, on June 20, 1974, and during the early stages of it there was no bird song to be heard as is quite usual during the middle of the day. As the light from the sun grew less the slight wind became colder and four or five Yellow-winged Honeyeaters (*Phylidonyris novaehollandiae*) called briefly, answering each other, then were silent for a few minutes and a couple called again. Then a family group of Splendid Wrens (*Malurus splendens*) gave a brief twitter just below the brow of the mountain and Kookaburras (*Dacelo gigas*) were heard giving evensong in the distance.

There was no further song during the total eclipse and bird life seemed to resume its normal tenor as the light improved again without

any fuss, other than two Magpies (*Gymnorhina dorsalis*) heard giving a brief morning carol.

However, the Silver Gulls (*Larus novaehollandiae*), which are very numerous and tame in Albany, seem to have had some very unpleasant shoeks. They were roosting on roofs and various vantage points not very far from the Senior Primary School in the main street when the light began to go and the air became colder. The leaders apparently decided it was time for roosting and after a great commotion led the flocks down towards the harbour. This decision took some time and darkness caught the two or three flocks some hundreds of metres from the shore line. They all settled on the grass—most on the Parade Street Soccer Ground—and remained there quite silently. When the light increased again the flocks took off and circled the centre of the town about fifty metres in the air for some time. Finally tiring of this the birds settled on buildings again but not on their accustomed perches or buildings. They favoured high ridge caps and had an unmistakable air of discomposure for the remainder of the day. One must be sympathetic with the seagulls for not only were they unable to reach their sleeping areas before darkness but were not allowed to go to sleep and to cap it all, their usual lunch hour feed of crusts and scraps of food on the school playground did not eventuate. The children all ate lunch in school and naturally crusts went into dustbins.

H. O. WEBSTER, Albany.

Departure Date of the Bridled Tern in Shark Bay.—Serventy *et al.* (*The Handbook of Australian Sea-Birds*, 1971, p. 228), give the departure date of the migratory Bridled Tern (*Sterna anaethetus*) as late February in the Perth area and April at Green Islets and the Abrolhos Islands. By a mere fluke I was able to determine the exact day and almost the hour when they left Slope Island, Shark Bay this year (1974).

On Sunday, February 24 my wife and I were on the island fishing most of the morning and noticed the terns seemed more agitated than usual, flying to and fro and settling on the rocks for only a few seconds at a time, and calling to each other incessantly. Only a small number seemed to be present so we guessed they were preparing to leave. We left the island at 11.45 a.m. and returned at 2 p.m., intending to take some photographs of the birds with a new 250 mm. lens I had just bought. However, not one bird was in sight and although we drove out there daily for the next week not a tern did we find.

—ROBERT C. MITCHELL, Hastings, N.Z.

Discovery of the Western Whipbird at Hopetoun.—The known distribution of the Western Whipbird, *Psophodes nigrogularis*, in Western Australia has been documented by Serventy and Whittell (*Birds of Western Australia*, 1967). It has been found at Two Peoples Bay and in mallee country around Borden and Gnowangerup and its most easterly location was hitherto 120 kilometres east of Borden near the Fitzgerald River.

On November 6, 1974 whilst visiting Hopetoun with members of the Royal Australasian Ornithologists' Union engaged in compiling a list of birds in the Fitzgerald National Park I heard a Western Whipbird calling near the coast road 3 km east of the town, and on November 9, two birds were observed and the identification confirmed. Subsequently a third bird was heard calling on the road to Ravensthorpe, 32 km from Hopetoun, by Mrs. J. Seabrook and Mrs. J. Clark. The known range is thus extended eastwards by 80 km.

The habitat was dense thickets of Round-leaved Moort, *Eucalyptus platypus*, and in the area close to Hopetoun this was supplemented by low coastal heath. All areas where the birds were found were composed of dense mallee regrowth resulting from fire.

An examination of tape recordings of the songs of these birds and